

# REGION 2 BI-WEEKLY

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## FUGATE DETAILS HIS 'INTENT' FOR AGENCY; 'OUTCOMES' TO DETERMINE \$ PRIORITIES

*"I only care about outcomes."*

So said Administrator Fugate on his first visit to Region II last July. He formalized this directive last week with the release of 'Charting Our Course: FEMA Administrator's Intent for FY2012-2016 Future Year Homeland Security Program (FYHSP)."

Despite its cumbersome title, the eight-page memo is a succinct roadmap for FEMA personnel – managers, staff and reservists – setting out five criteria to evaluate all agency plans and programs going forward. The five guidelines are:

- Strengthen the Nation's resilience to disasters;
- Build Unity of Effort among the entire emergency management team – Federal, State, local, tribal government, private sector, non-government organizations (NGO), communities and individuals;
- Meet the needs of disaster survivors and effectively support recovery of disaster affected communities;
- Work with our partners to address our most significant risks; and
- Build, sustain and improve FEMA's mission support and workforce capabilities.

To the extent that any agency initiative does not advance the guidelines above, they will not be funded.

The Administrator's "Intent" anticipates the Obama Administration's new National Security Strategy, which in turn draws on the Department of Homeland Security's first ever Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR). The QHSR sets out DHS policy for the next four years, and assigns FEMA the task of ensuring the Nation's resiliency to disasters. To do this, it sets four goals for FEMA:

1. Mitigate hazards: Strengthen capacity at all levels of society to withstand threats and hazards



2. Enhance preparedness: Engage all levels and segments of society to improve preparedness.
3. Ensure effective emergency response: Strengthen emergency response capacity nationwide.
4. Rapidly recover: Improve the nation's ability to rapidly recover.

While each of these documents emphasizes the need to strengthen the Nation's resiliency in the wake of natural and man-made disasters, the Administrator's "Intent" specifically recognizes the essential role individuals and communities must play in disaster response and recovery. FEMA's job – through its partnership with the states – will be to foster and enhance local capabilities.

And, true to his word, the Administrator's "Intent" also calls for "meaningful metrics that do not merely measure the processes that support disaster response and short-term recovery but will further measure the actual outcomes of our disaster and recovery programs," including the on-time delivery of requested materials, whether temporary housing is available for survivors, and whether citizens feel better equipped to respond to disasters after their response and recovery training.

# GETTING OUT THE WORD



Region II personnel were among the headliners at a Grants Workshop hosted by Congressman John Adler (NJ-3) last week. The workshop brought together first responders, representatives from local government and community organizations for an overview of federal programs available to local communities.

Federal Coordinating Officer Steve DiBlasio, who is managing NJ's two open disasters – DR-1867 and DR-1873 – detailed the Mitigation grants available as a result of a major declaration.

Regional Fire Program Specialist Dave Gronsbell (above) provided an overview of FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG), and helped explain how municipalities can make their applications more competitive by aligning their requests with AFG program priorities for the specific fiscal year in which they apply.

The AFG grant program is available to all fire departments or standalone EMS agencies to better equip first responders. Grants are available for training, personal protective equipment, vehicle acquisition and regional projects.

The Grants Workshop took place in Ocean County, which is among the declared counties for both DR-1867 and DR-1873. The county may be eligible for a variety of public assistance grants, funding anything from beach replenishment to snow removal costs, DeBlasio told the crowd. He urged applicants to work closely with their FEMA project specialists and NJ Office of Emergency Management to ensure they receive every dollar of assistance for which they are eligible.

Other agencies participating in the congressman's workshop included U.S. Department of Energy, U. S. Department of Agriculture, HUD, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, the N.J. Department of Transportation, NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and NJ Board of Public Utilities.

# LET IT SNOW

By Louis Eswood

Last November, FEMA released its new Snow Assistance Policy, which changed the way FEMA evaluates, recommends and responds to snow events.

The most significant change is that FEMA will now evaluate requests for snow assistance with the same criteria used for a major disaster declaration.

The Stafford Act explicitly states in its definition of a major disaster the term "snowstorm," thus making snow events eligible for a major disaster declaration. The new policy will open up much more assistance for states as a major disaster declaration may include all of the public assistance categories, whereas an emergency declaration — which is how snow storms were routinely dealt with in the past — limited assistance to \$5 million.



In addition to the requirements of a major disaster declaration, the new snow assistance policy retains the previous requirement that a county receive a "record or near record" snowfall. While the requirement is not new, the way a record or near record snowfall is determined is. Under the new policy, the snowfall, as reported by the National Weather Service, must be compared to the highest National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) historical record in the county to ensure that the snowfall event exceeds or is near a true record.

The new policy also requires that the requesting state submit an estimate of eligible public assistance costs that meet or exceed the county **and** statewide per capita cost threshold. This requirement is the standard for any major disaster declaration.

New Jersey became the first state to receive a "Snowstorm" declaration under the new policy on February 5th (DR-1879). Virginia, Maryland, Iowa and Nebraska have since followed received snow declarations.



# IMAT DRILL

The calls went out at 5AM, summoning Region II's IMAT team to Fort Monmouth.

The 16 member team — 4 permanent members, 12 on collateral duty — assembled to test whether they could all get to their rally point at the Fort within 2 hours, and whether the equipment supporting their assigned missions was working and ready to go.

Led by Tom Fargione, 90% of the team showed within the 2-hour window, despite the fact some team members went to the wrong Bagel Boys, the on-Fort assembly site. (Apparently, there are three Bagel Boys, within a one-mile radius, ensuring all team members got coffee and some breakfast.)

This "lightning strike" (patterned on Administrator Fugate's signature "Thunderbolts") drill identified challenges the team may face when activated, including getting members without personal vehicles out of Manhattan, access problems with the teams' satellite phone provider, and the need to drill at least once a month so that the documents allowing access to the base are always current.

And, as a result of the early morning assembly, Logistics head John Alonso is developing a logistics punch card for all equipment.

## ***From Drill to Standby***

The successful drill foreshadowed a actual "standby" for the IMAT team this past weekend, when the Region II WATCH put out word of a conference call Saturday to alert the team to the possible tsunami following the earthquake in Chile. Luckily, the team was not needed, as the anticipated tsunami dissipated before reaching Hawaii and other US holdings in the Pacific. But the IMAT team was ready, packing bags, making child care arranges and waiting for the order to deploy.



IMAT members check satellite dish during recent drill.

# EARTHQUAKE TALK



The recent Haiti earthquake has triggered an increased interest on earthquake readiness for Puerto Rico's industries. As a result, on February 19<sup>th</sup> the Safety and Occupational Health committee of the PR Industrialists

Health committee of the PR Industrialists Association sponsored a full-day conference to address related issues and discuss preparedness protocols, contingency plans, and security aspects the private sector must have in place to deal with this hazard.

Magda De La Matta (above), CAD Earthquake Program Manager, spoke at the conference. She was joined by speakers from the American Red Cross, PREMA, PR Seismic Network, and representatives from the University of Puerto Rico's Mayaguez Campus. De La Matta shared information about FEMA programs, and provided readiness tips on what to do before, during and after an earthquake.

Representatives from the construction sector, private schools, environmental assessment companies, engineering, telecommunications, the insurance sector, as well as Walmart and the Hanes Brand factory also participated.

## **MICROSOFT REDUX**

The last issue of the NEWSLETTER neglected to include the "special code" to access a Microsoft Home Office program for \$9.95. Our apologies for the omission and the frustration. Copy and paste the link below:

<http://www.microsoftup.com/hupus/home.aspx?culture=en-US>

Enter code: 19C2092D65